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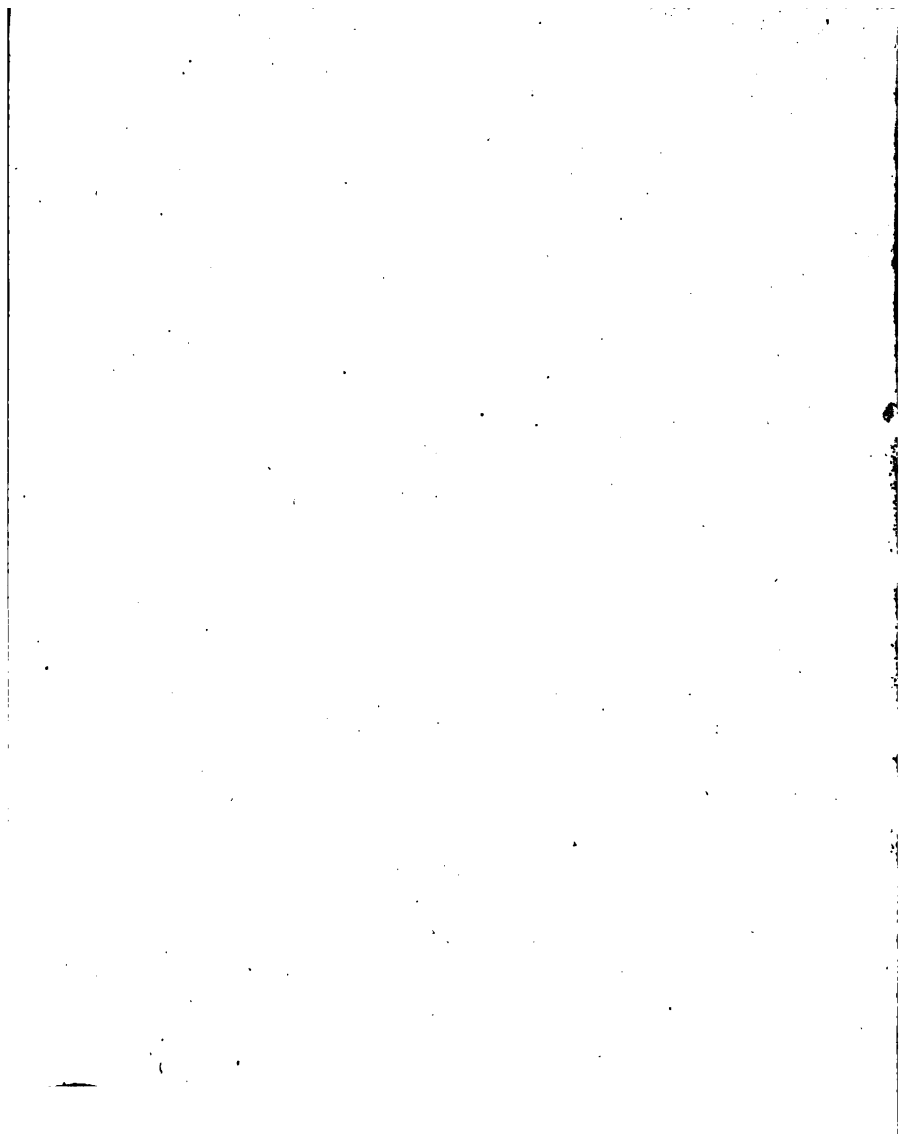
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In Memoriam.

REV. ROBERT BUCHANAN, D.D.,

DIED 31ST MARCH, 1875.

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Rev Benjamin

WHITE, PHOTO.

In Memoriam.

REV. ROBERT BUCHANAN, D.D.

*SERMONS PREACHED IN FREE COLLEGE CHURCH,
GLASGOW, on SABBATH, 18th APRIL, 1875.*

BY THE

REV. JOHN ROXBURGH, D.D.,

AND

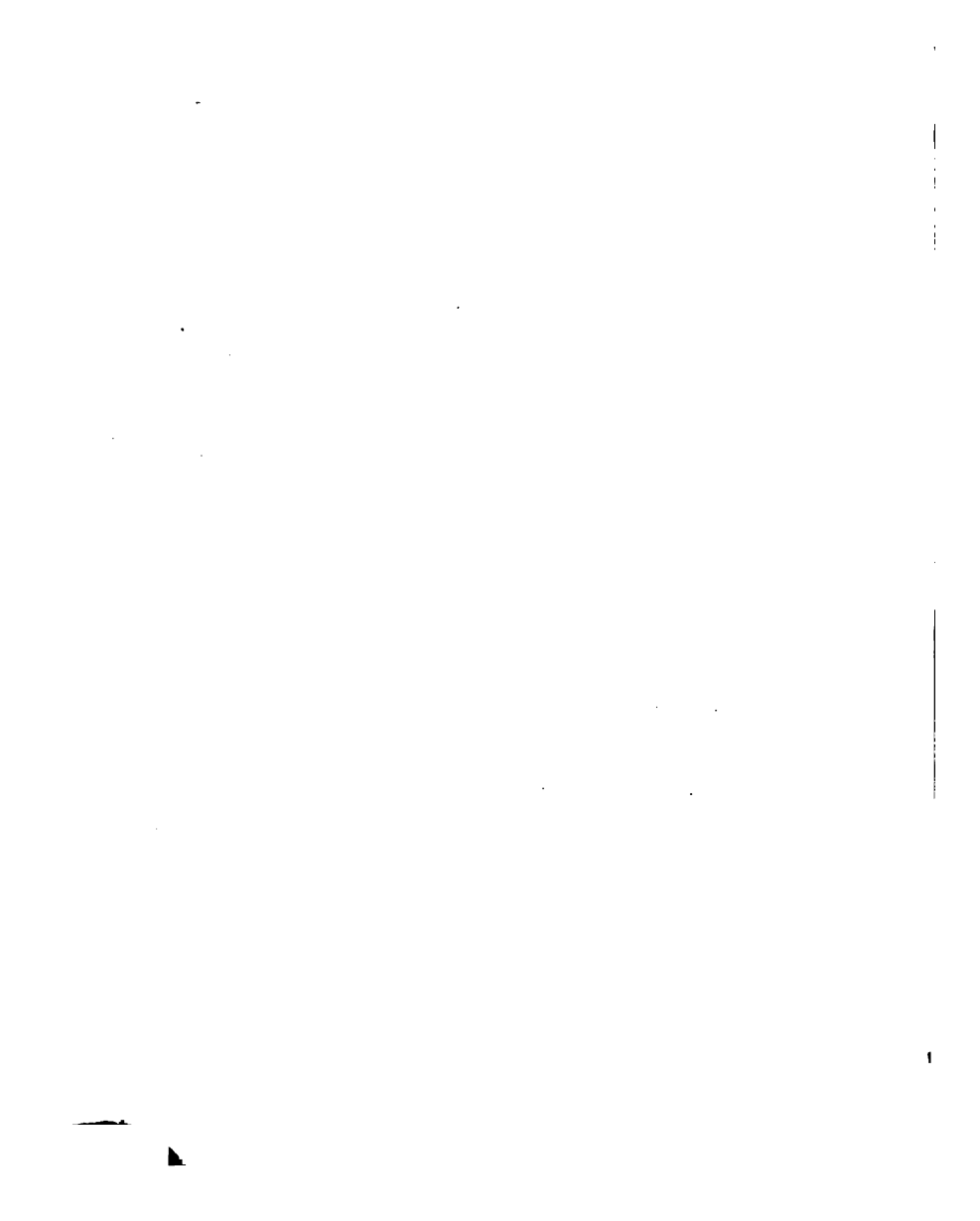
REV. SIR HENRY W. MONCREIFF, BART., D.D.

*Published by Request of the Office-Bearers, with Minute of Session
and Pastoral Letter.*

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*The REV. DR. ROXBURGH, of Free St. John's,
preached on Sabbath Forenoon, the 18th of
April, from Luke xxiii, 45.*

THE first feeling which these words awaken is one of admiration at the readiness of Christ to impart the blessings of His purchase when sincerely sought ; and this to an extent far beyond the requests or expectations of the suppliant. If the *power* of His grace was wonderfully manifested in the thief's conversion, the *freeness* of it and its unsearchable riches were no less wonderfully manifested in his pardon, and in the assurance given him of an immediate participation of the blessedness of paradise.

But our object at present is not to dwell on the general reflections to which the

words give rise, but to invite your attention to the doctrine which they contain—a doctrine which will one day possess a deep personal interest to us all. That we may distinctly understand what it is, we must attend to the import of the terms employed.

It was a familiar phrase of the Jews to say of a just man when dying, "To-day he shall sit in the bosom of Abraham." And it was the received opinion of the nation, that pious souls, on their separation from the body, were immediately received into paradise, without any interruption or suspension of existence. Now, as we must suppose Christ to have spoken in the sense in which the dying thief would assuredly understand Him—that is, according to the known and common sentiments of the Jews—His words cannot otherwise be explained than as a promise that *that very day* his soul should pass into a state of conscious joy and felicity. The promise could be fulfilled only by his being with Christ

in his *soul*; for the *bodies* of both were immediately after the crucifixion committed to different graves. Nor can we conceive of their being together that same day in any other sense than by the souls of both, each in its disembodied state, passing immediately on death into some proper locality, here called *Paradise*. The first thing then clearly implied in the words is, that the transition from this world into a state of blessedness should be immediate. No countenance is given to the notion of an unconscious and inactive condition, a sleep of the soul, from death to the resurrection. No countenance is given to the notion that the soul is so connected with the body, and dependent on it, as to be incapable of a separate existence and agency. No; the soul of the penitent and pardoned thief should no sooner quit its earthly tabernacle than it should meet with Christ in the invisible world. Accordingly, they who deny an immediate state of glory to believers after death, are

driven to the questionable expedient of proposing a different reading of our Lord's words. They refer the expression *to-day*, not to the time when the promise should be performed, but to the time when it was made ; as if our Lord had said, " Verily, I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with me in paradise." But besides that this is an unwarrantable liberty with the text, and an ungraceful rendering of the words—making the expression in question a meaningless expletive—it is, as we have seen, contradicted by the received opinions of the Jews concerning paradise and the uninterrupted existence of the human soul, according to which received opinions our Lord must have used the words, as in this sense alone the person to whom they were spoken could understand them.

As to the term *Paradise*, it was first employed to denote the garden of Eden, where our first parents were placed. As descriptive of a place of delights, it came to be figuratively applied to the abode of

the spirits of the just, where they dwell after death in a state of felicity till the resurrection. This application suggests an analogy between the literal and the figurative paradise. It suggests that, as the one was the chosen seat of innocence, and unmingled enjoyment, and unreserved communion with God, so the other shall resemble it in these respects—that *there* the spirits of the just, perfected in holiness, shall freely expatiate amid the glories and felicities lavished around them ; shall rejoice in the society of other sanctified and redeemed beings ; shall be finally freed from all wants and sorrows and temptations ; and, beholding the face of God, shall adore *His* exhaustless bounty who ceases not before them daily to fill heaven and earth with the treasures of his grace.

That we may fully comprehend the substance of our Lord's promise to the thief on the cross, it is necessary to consider in what part of creation this metaphorical paradise—this place of divine

comforts, destined to receive the spirits of the saints—is situated. For the soul, though separated from the body, and though of an immaterial nature, must be in some place. “To exist without relation to place (it has been truly said) seems to be one of the incommunicable perfections of the Divine Being; and it is hardly to be conceived that any created spirit, of however high an order, can be without locality, or without such determination of its existence at any given time to some certain place, that it shall be true to say of it, Here it is, and not elsewhere.” (Horsley.) Where it is immediately percipient and active, producing effects, or having effects produced on it, there is its *place*. And where it is under the blissful influences of the grace and glory of God, and enjoys the society of other departed saints, there is its *paradise*.

Now, as to the part of creation where this residence of blessed spirits is situated, two opinions have been entertained.

Some have supposed an *intermediate region*, distinct from the state of blessedness in heaven, and the place of punishment in hell, into which the souls of all men pass at death. This region they suppose to be divided into two great provinces, separated by an impassable gulf, the one destined for the reception of the righteous, the other of the wicked. Here they exist in a state of consciousness and activity, and experience a measure of happiness or of misery arising from an approving or a condemning conscience, exercised in reflecting on their past life of holiness or of sin. The measure of happiness or misery, however, is not so great as it shall be after the resurrection and final judgment, when their eternal states shall be divinely and judicially determined, and when, reunited to their respective bodies, they shall either enter into heaven or hell, to have their reward or their punishment consummated. This view accords with the common belief, in so far as it supposes the souls of men to be

susceptible of happiness or misery after dissolution; and also, in so far as it supposes that happiness or misery not to be completed till the resurrection. It differs from the common belief in supposing an intermediate region, a place of spirits, neither heaven nor hell, in which they exist during the interval between death and the resurrection. And though supported by the authority of learned and pious men, aided by much elaborate criticism on obscure passages of Scripture, it cannot be reconciled with other and plainer texts which I shall have occasion to quote in the progress of this discourse.

I go on therefore to the second opinion or doctrine on this subject, according to which, the souls of believers do at their death immediately pass into glory, and, made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. According to this doctrine, *paradise* and *heaven* signify

the same place. So the apostle Paul represents them, when speaking of being rapt into the *third heaven*, and of the unutterable things he there heard. "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago . . . caught up to the *third heaven*. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into *paradise*, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." This language not only shows that the apostle firmly believed the soul to be distinct from the body, and capable of perception, activity, and enjoyment, in a state of separation from it; it further shows that he understood the *third heaven* and *paradise* to be the same. The words are used as synonymous, and descriptive of the same vision. Now, the third heaven, with which paradise is identified by the apostle, was supposed by the Jews to be the seat of God's throne, and the habitation of holy angels. The first heaven, according

to their mode of expression, was the region of the air, where the birds fly. The second heaven, or heaven of heavens, was the part of space where the stars are. And the third heaven was the invisible region beyond, the seat of divine power and majesty, the Father's imperial court, the holy of holies, where God more immediately resides, and His presence is more immediately manifested, and whither Jesus visibly ascended after His resurrection.

Again, in the epistle of Christ from heaven to the Church of Ephesus, it is promised "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." The tree of life is a figurative expression taken from the account of the garden of Eden, and denoting the pure and satisfying enjoyments of the celestial state. And it is represented as growing in the midst of the paradise of God ; that is, in the place where the presence and love of God are most abundantly manifested. This then is

substantially a promise of the fullest and most intimate fellowship with God himself in heaven. Now, these are all the passages of Scripture in which the word paradise is found. And from each of them it appears that it is not used to indicate any third or intermediate place, but is only another term for heaven itself, designed to hold it out as a place of purity, of freedom from sin and sorrow, of delightful refreshment, and of near and never-ending communion with Christ, the author and matter of life spiritual and eternal. And so, when Jesus said to the penitent thief on the cross, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," he virtually declared that, before the end of that day, his disembodied spirit should be introduced into the immediate and blissful presence of God in heaven.

Hence the general doctrine founded on the text is, that the soul of the believer at the moment of death is received into the highest heavens, and enters on a state of

unchangeable felicity. This doctrine we maintain (1) against those who hold the opinion of a third or intermediate state. We maintain it (2) against those who suppose the soul to exist in a state of sleep or unconsciousness from death to the resurrection. And we maintain it (3) against those who conceive the life of the whole man to be extinguished during that interval. To every believer in his dying hour we may address the words, "To-day thou shalt be with Jesus in paradise," *i. e.*, in heaven. He died to secure this happy region for you. Thither He has Himself gone, and He is preparing there a place for you. You are a member of His body; and where He is, He desires that you should be also. Having died for your salvation, He will instantly, on your own death, put you in possession of the rights and privileges and benefits which He acquired for you at such a price, and which He is exalted to bestow.

The doctrine now laid down is agreeable

at once with the intimations of reason, and with the whole tenour of Scripture. It harmonizes, first of all, with what the Bible teaches us of the constitution of man, in the history which it gives of his creation. It ascribes to the body and soul a different origin, and represents them as different substances. The body was formed of the dust of the earth, and liable to be dissolved into its original elements. The soul was a distinct and immaterial principle, breathed into the body by the Almighty, giving to it life and activity, and capable of surviving its dissolution. This account accords with the general sentiments of mankind in all ages, and probably passed down by tradition from one generation to another, regulating the popular belief, and influencing the speculations of the learned. Or, if the almost universal belief in a state beyond the grave is not to be traced to this source, and so to God Himself as its author, the account is at least consonant with the natural suggestions of the human mind.

For, however the uniformity may be accounted for, the independent existence and immortality of the soul have received the consent of mankind in every age and country. As the soul is thus from its nature capable of perpetual duration, or of continued conscious existence, so its capacity of endless improvement renders it improbable in the highest degree that its activity should be destroyed, and its progress arrested. Indeed, the very fact that it is capable of existing in a state of separation is a presumption that it is not involved in the fate of its companion the body ; and lays on those who dispute this, the obligation to find some reason or probability for its ceasing to exist. Assuredly, no such reason is to be found in the spirituality of its nature, and its exemption from all known causes of corruption and decay—in its high powers, and amazing activity, and instinctive horror at annihilation—in its capacity, independently of the body, of the enjoyment of God, and of happiness or

misery from its own reflections, and hopes, and prospects, from its review of the past, and the anticipations which conscience forms, on that review, of future punishments and rewards. These, on the contrary, are all indications that this immaterial substance will survive the dissolution of the body with which it is here associated—will continue to exist in a state of sensibility and activity—and that, in the language of Scripture, “when the dust returns to the earth as it was, the spirit shall return to God who gave it.” To this let me add, that the doctrine of a future retribution, so plainly required by the unequal distribution of good and evil in a present life, renders it necessary that the soul should have an uninterrupted existence, in order that the same conscious being who here lived a life of sin or holiness, may hereafter receive according to his deserts, and eat the fruit of his own doings. To suppose a suspension of the existence of the conscious being, or the loss of it for a time, is to

suppose the loss of memory and reflection; and it is inconceivable on this supposition how one should be punished or rewarded for qualities or actions which he cannot recall by the exercise of any faculty.

I have referred to these important considerations, in order to show that in maintaining the doctrine of a separate state of the soul, we are asserting only what is agreeable to the common sentiments of mankind. But our faith in this momentous truth must rest ultimately on the authority *of the Word of God*. There is no peace to our mind, and no end to our speculations, but in the believing reception of the testimony of Jesus. Nor in the Bible is there a want of explicit assurances on the subject. If you go, for example, to the Old Testament, you find the doctrine in such passages as these: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory." "The righteous is taken away from the evil to come: he shall enter into peace." The transition of the soul is, you

observe, immediate from this world of strife and turmoil to a state of glory and tranquillity in the world to come. To the same purpose are those passages of the New Testament which speak of the spirits of just men made perfect, and of departed saints as engaged in the worship of God in heaven. We might further argue the doctrine from the story of the rich man and Lazarus, from the appearance of Moses and Elias to our Saviour on the mount of Transfiguration, and from the prayer of Stephen in his dying moments, when he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and he called, and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit ;" meaning obviously that Jesus would forthwith take his soul to dwell with Him in His Father's house. But not to heap up proofs unnecessarily, I conclude by referring you to the following Scriptures from Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and from his Epistle to the Phillipians, wherein he compares the enjoyment which Christians can

attain by their continuance in this world with that which they enter on at their departure out of it: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." "We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." "To me to live is Christ, to die is gain." "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." These passages are inexplicable, except on the belief that the souls of believers at their death do immediately pass into glory in the presence of Christ.

It may be objected to what has been said, "What, according to this doctrine, becomes of the resurrection? Where is there any place or any need for it? If the souls of departed saints are so happy in their separate state—if already they enjoy a paradise—why bring them back to be

united to these earthly tabernacles?" I answer, that the resurrection is necessary to consummate the happiness of the saints. For though their souls are capable in a state of separation of loving and serving God, and enjoying the delights of communion with Him, yet man is a compound of body and spirit, and is designed to reach the perfection of his nature in this state of union. The blessedness of believers will not rise to its greatest height until this union of soul and body be restored, when they shall be rewarded in the whole nature in which they acted as subjects of God's government. Their bodies, too, will be made suitable companions for their glorified spirits, and will be fitted for the refined pleasures and divine exercises in which they will be engaged. Rescued from the darkness and corruption of the grave, Jesus will bring them forth in all the beauty and vigour of His own glorified person; and uniting them once more in fellowship with their redeemed

and perfected souls, will carry them up to join in the joys and services of the upper sanctuary. As the resurrection is thus necessary to consummate the happiness of the saints, so is it necessary as a sensible demonstration of the power and authority with which Jesus is invested, for the completion of the hopes of His people, and the final conviction of His unbelieving enemies. For, if it is proper that men should be judged in the body for things done in the body, and that therefore there should be a visible judgment; so, as preparatory to this, must there be a resurrection of the just and of the unjust, in order that all may be in a condition to receive that explicit divine sentence which is to be publicly passed on every man in the face of the whole world. The resurrection is thus required as an impressive manifestation of the authority of the Redeemer, and as a solemn winding up of the history of our race, and of the great work of our redemption. And on this account, as well as

because it is needful to complete the blessedness of the righteous in both parts of their nature, must it be looked forward to with joyful anticipation, even by the perfected spirits of the just in heaven, as a day of triumph and of jubilee.

Our subject would not be complete without a reference, however brief, to the *happiness* of paradise—wherein it shall consist. Imagine what a rapturous transition it must have been to the dying thief to pass in a moment from the ignominy and sufferings of his cross to the rest and blessedness of the celestial state. But, even to the believer who, without a pang, calmly falls asleep in Jesus, the change will be scarcely less transporting. Your happiness, believer, will be at once negative and positive. It will be negative as regards the deliverance of your soul from its painful struggle with sin and temptation, with the waywardness of its own will, and the irregularity and inordinacy of its own passions and affections ; and, generally, as regards your entire freedom from all

the imperfections of your present condition. *There* you will have no shortcomings to confess, and no wants to be redressed. You will no more have cause to complain of distance from God, and trouble from corruption. But, freed from each encumbering weight—no longer fettered by its connection with the frail and corrupt body—and at full liberty to exert its native energies, your soul will soar to the region of divine light and love, and bathe in the flood of glory that encircles the throne of the Eternal. But the blessedness of paradise will be also positive. It will consist in increased and ever-increasing degrees of knowledge, and holiness, and love, and peace, and joy. Your faculties will be constantly exercised and invigorated in making new discoveries respecting the matchless perfections and mysterious operations of the great object of your adoration; and, admitted to the very fountain of truth, you will there quench your thirst, and satisfy your infinite desires. And, beholding with

wonder and delight the Eternal Author of all being and the Source of all excellence, in the glorified person of Immanuel, you will grow into His likeness, and place your felicity in bowing to His will, and imitating His attributes, and moving, as an ever-living orb, around Him as your centre. Oh what a blessed change to the children of God—which transfers them from the company of sinful men into the society of saints and angels, and the presence of the Lamb—which releases the weary sufferer from a bed of sickness, and a body of sin, and a world of guilt, and introduces him into a land where no tear is ever shed, and no sigh is ever breathed—which unveils the glories of eternity, and completes his restoration to the lost image and forfeited favour of his Maker!

You cannot fail to feel how comforting all this is to Christians on the death of pious relatives. There are, perhaps, few of you but have had such relatives, at whose deathbeds you watched with anxious

interest, and whom you often attempt to follow into the world of spirits, concerned to know their present condition and employments. And it may be that, when their mortal body was carried forth from your dwelling, and consigned to the silent grave, you had a sense of dreariness and solitude, as if they had ceased to be. And now you look to their empty place, and revisit their accustomed haunts, and you sit lonely indulging your grief, as if, because you meet them no more in daily intercourse, you were robbed of them for ever. It is not so! Verily I say unto you, they are this day with Jesus in paradise. They have exchanged your society for that of heaven. They are employed in the services and sharing the enjoyments of that purer and nobler sphere. And though their death has been loss to you, it has been unspeakable gain to them. Wherefore, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have

no hope." And as you recall the devout converse you have had with them, and renew the memory of their Christian virtues, pray for grace to press onward after those who have finished their course with joy, and to be followers of them who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises.

Let the same consideration reconcile your own mind to the prospect of death, and deliver you from that bondage of spirit in which even Christians are sometimes held by it. In your case, believer, it can but kill the body, and after that hath no more that it can do. Your soul survives its stroke. Yea, the shock is only a kind of rude violence by which your soul is disentangled from present clogs, and set at liberty to mount into its proper element, and expatiate among objects suitable to its nature. Wherefore, that you may not be enslaved by the fear of death, supplicate the grace and heavenly-mindedness which may make you long to depart and to be with Christ,

and the implicit confidence in Him which shall enable you to say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for thou art with me."

I need hardly say that I have been guided in the choice of the subject on which I have now addressed you, by the solemn event which has turned you this day into a congregation of mourners. How sudden and startling ! Your honoured and lamented pastor was to-day associated with other men in the pursuits and enjoyments of life, diligent and useful to the last ; on the morrow, the weapons of his warfare had dropped from his hand, and he himself has passed through the vail which separates the visible and invisible worlds. How like a translation ! "He was not : for God took him." It is a merciful dispensation as regards him, but to us who survive an irreparable loss ; and this loss falls with peculiar heaviness on you. For

however mitigated by your continued enjoyment of the faithful services of your devoted young Pastor, yet, what a wrench of the tenderest ties, what a wound to the best feelings and affections of the heart, what a rush of overpowering recollections, are all connected with the death of an aged and revered minister! Doubtless there are among you very mingled feelings and great searchings of heart this day. There are those of you to whom his ministry was savingly blessed, and who recall him to mind with love and gratitude as your spiritual father, or as the instrument, under God, of building you up in your holy faith. There are those of you in whose memory he is associated with visits of sympathy to your homes in seasons of affliction and bereavement, and with the recollection of strength and comfort ministered to you in times of need. Perhaps there are those too, who, alas! look back with bitter regret on earnest remonstrances and

appeals heard with indifference—happy, if at last his dead lips prove more persuasive than his living tongue, and his impressive death exercise a more powerful influence over you than his ministry did even in his meridian day. For, after all, the noblest memorial of a Christian minister's labours is a surviving congregation of enlightened, large-hearted, living Christians, animated by his spirit, and guided by his example. This will be a more worthy testimony of your affectionate regard than would be the erection of monuments of brass and marble to perpetuate his name. Let him live in your memory. Let his name, and the graces of his character, and his faithful counsels, be indelibly impressed on the tablet of your heart. So, following in his footsteps, you will come to the same glorious result of your faith and obedience to which he has attained; and teacher and taught, the faithful pastor and they to whom his instructions have been savingly

blessed by the Spirit, shall be united together through eternity in the contemplation and enjoyment of God, and shall pursue together their endless inquiries into the glorious mysteries of Creation, Providence, and Redemption—no longer haunted by the thought that the endearing bond that connects them shall ever again be separated by the stroke of death.

When we consider the vast amount of the business of the Church, and how much of the management of public affairs generally, was laid upon his shoulders, the wonder is, that our venerated friend and father was enabled to be so exemplary in the discharge of his ministerial and pastoral duties. This illustrates the method and punctuality and industry which so remarkably distinguished him. It illustrates, too, his deep concern for your spiritual advancement. He found a time for every duty, and was a model to younger ministers of pastoral diligence

and fidelity. Ye yourselves are his witnesses how truly he could say, "Ye know after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you."

. But I have no intention to attempt here a sketch of the life, or an analysis of the character, of Dr. Buchanan. Even were I equal to the task, this would be out of place in addressing an audience who have had constant opportunities of personal intercourse with him, and in speaking of him in a City wherein he spent forty years of his life—"seen and read of all men"—ever among the foremost in every good work—and of which City an authority worthy of all respect recently pronounced him the most prominent citizen. In these circumstances, it would be a work of supererogation to advert in detail either to his multifarious services as an indefatigable Christian

patriot and philanthropist ; or to his more special services as a leader and guide of the Church ; his noble contendings for freedom and independence, his unwearied and successful labours in connection with Church extension, the Sustentation of the ministry, the cause of Christian union, the improvement of education, and the extension of its benefits to all classes of the community. And yet, I would like to add my humble tribute of reverence and love to those testimonies which have been so eloquently and affectionately borne to the virtues and graces of his character from so many of the pulpits of the land. I have purposely selected these two words, *reverence* and *love*. For, analysing the feelings of my own heart, I can find none that so expressively describe the sentiments which his rare combination of gifts and graces habitually awakened within me. My first recollection of him is as a young student in his college gown, during the course of his first session at college ; and, although

only three years my senior, I well remember the reverential respect with which I was even then inspired by his sedate, self-possessed, and courteous bearing. This was subsequently followed by an early intimacy, and this intimacy at length ripened into a cordial friendship, which it has been my unspeakable privilege to enjoy for more than thirty years. Looking back on all my intercourse with him during this lengthened period, I have to say that, whether viewed as a public man or in the privacy of domestic life, I have never known a man of higher and purer principles and aims ; a man more real and genuine, and more sincerely and unselfishly devoted to the advancement of the best interests of his fellow-men. I have never known a man less actuated by the promptings of fleshly wisdom, and whose private convictions and public professions were more entirely in harmony. In contemplating any movement or course of action, the great question with him never was, Is it

expedient? Is it politic? Will it be good management? But simply, Is it right? Once satisfied on this head, then, sustained by conscious rectitude, he applied himself to the prosecution of the object with unflinching resolution, undeterred by the difficulties of the undertaking, or the formidable opposition offered to it. For he was not only a wise and a good, but a brave man; and under his bland and placid exterior possessed no small measure of the indomitable spirit of our heroic reformer, over whose grave it was said, "There lies one who never feared the face of man."

If the qualities to which I have referred were fitted to inspire that profound respect which all the intimate friends of Dr. Buchanan felt towards him, he possessed other qualities no less fitted to inspire *love*. He himself was not demonstrative in the expression of his feelings. Persons of an opposite temperament, and superficial observers, were apt to mistake his reserve for coldness. But there could be no greater

misconception. Under the unruffled surface, there flowed a deep warm current of natural kindness and Christian affection. Accordingly, his house was the resort of brethren in distress from all corners of the land. Was any one perplexed with difficulty, or suffering from injustice, or discouraged by trials? recourse was forthwith had to Dr. Buchanan for counsel ; so that to a large extent it was true that there came upon him daily "the care of all the churches." Nor did they resort to him in vain. A friendly welcome ever awaited them. If their cause was good, it awakened forthwith a ready sympathy, followed by ungrudged and self-sacrificing efforts to effect relief or deliverance, or by that wise counsel which his sagacity and ripe experience knew so well how to adapt to the circumstances of each case.

In a word, take him all in all—his manly and commanding form—his benignant countenance—his dignified and courteous bearing—his great and varied talents and

attainments, and the noble uses to which, under the direction of a sanctified mind, they were applied—and his long and willing services to the Church and the community—we may not expect to see his like again. To which let me add, that those who would worthily appreciate his character should have known him in the bosom of his friends and family. But into that sacred enclosure we shall not intrude, farther than to express our tenderest sympathy with those who have been bereaved of one distinguished by the faithful and affectionate fulfilment of all the duties that belong to a Husband and Father. Let me assure them that they will never cease to occupy a large place in the inmost heart of the people of the Free Church of Scotland, and specially of the citizens of this great city, which he who is gone has laid under such a debt of gratitude by his invaluable public services. Truly “a prince and a great man is fallen in Israel;” and we shall see his

face and hear his pleasant voice no more in this world. Oh may the great Head of the Church endow his surviving servants with increased measures of the grace and energy of his Holy Spirit, and raise up a succession of able and devoted ministers in our land to carry on the work which others have laid down! And when those who in their day were distinguished benefactors of the poor and destitute and depraved, and eloquent advocates of the interests of truth and righteousness, are being summoned by death from the scene of their benevolent labours to the enjoyment of their heavenly rest, let us, as individuals, and as a Church, cleave with increased purpose of heart unto our great High Priest Himself, in a spirit at once of implicit submission to His will, and of unreserved dependence on His grace and wisdom and power.

The REV. SIR HENRY WELLWOOD MONCREIFF,
BARONET, D.D., *of Free St. Cuthbert's,*
Edinburgh, preached on Sabbath afternoon,
the 18th of April, from Psalm cxlv, 18.

IN discoursing from these words, I propose to direct your attention—I, To calling upon God in truth; II, To the nearness of God to those who call upon Him in truth; and III, To the encouragement thus given to prayer.

I. Let us attend to “calling upon God in truth.”

It is one thing to call upon the name of God, so as to present an appearance of reverence, or an appearance of dependence, or an appearance of confidence. It is another thing to call upon the Lord in truth. The term “The Lord,”

indicates the covenant keeping Lord of Israel. To call upon Him in truth, in the days of the Psalmist, was to have in praying to Him a believing and heartfelt respect both to His promises and His appointments. His promises were the promises belonging to the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the promises of grace and blessedness to the seed of Abraham, as heirs of a precious inheritance — the promises which were amplified in the language of the prophets into assurances of glorious things in an everlasting kingdom. Under the Gospel dispensation, these promises, in their true and lasting import, apply to all believers in the sacrifice of Jesus. “If ye be Christ’s,” says Paul (Gal. iii, 29), “then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” To call in truth upon the Lord, while the Jewish system prevailed in accordance with divine counsels, was to call upon the Lord as the God of Abraham, and to look, when calling

upon Him, at types and sacrifices as foreshadowing the true advent of an all sufficient Redeemer. To call in truth upon the Lord, in these days, is to call upon Him as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to look, when calling upon Him, at the sacrifice of Jesus as the offering up of the Lamb of God in full atonement for human guilt. There is now no true calling upon the Lord, except where the need of Christ is felt to save the soul from guilt, and Christ is laid hold of with confidence by the heart as an actual Saviour from guilt, through the atoning power of His death upon the cross.

If I ask God for mercy, without reference to the blood of Jesus, then I ask Him to make void His holy law which condemns me. Therefore, I am not calling upon Him in truth. If I regard iniquity in my heart while I pray to Him; if I secretly cherish any inclination to some corrupt or ungodly course while

I am giving myself to the exercises of devotion ; or, in other words, if I look for acceptance with God without repenting of my sin, and without the turning of my heart in new obedience to the ways of holiness : then I am not calling upon the Lord in truth. Then He will not hear me. Then I am beating the air, and attempting an impossible reconciliation of my carnal inclinations with my religious hopes. But if I see Jesus as the Lamb of God sacrificed for me—if I listen to His gracious voice when He says, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest"—if, discovering the excellency of His cross, I have turned my mind in faith to all the truth which it sets before me—if, renouncing all self-righteous claims, and confessing my sins, I have thrown myself in deep repentance upon the peculiar mercy of God in Christ as thus revealed to me—and if, trusting altogether in that peculiar mercy, I am pouring out my soul's anxieties and aspirations before

Jehovah, and entreating Him, for Christ's sake, to have compassion upon me, to blot out all my sins, and to prepare me for His kingdom ; then I am calling upon the Lord in truth. Then my prayer is the prayer of faith. Then it will be heard and answered by a covenant keeping Jehovah. When we plead what Christ has done and suffered—when we plead what Christ has promised—when we plead what God has pledged Himself to do for Christ's kingdom—then there need be no limit, either to the importunity or to the confidence of our supplications. For then we are calling upon the Lord in truth. In this manner of prayer, we may ask not only for spiritual blessings but for temporal. For when we commit our way entirely to the Lord—to our God and Father in Christ—when the thought in our hearts, if not the utterance of our lips is, "Not our will but thine be done;" then we are calling upon the Lord in truth for such measure of outward benefits

as His wisdom may see meet to bestow : and we may expect Him to hear our prayer, and answer us according to the multitude of His mercies in our joyful experience.

The language of my text conveys a rich assurance to all those of whom it speaks. It is a very precious thing, indeed, to know or to have a strong persuasion that we belong to their number. It is of great practical importance to our spiritual prosperity for us to make sure whether or not we be included in so happy a company. And there is no small danger of people deceiving themselves upon the subject. Probably most of you, my brethren, admit yourselves to be persons who *call upon the Lord*. And if asked whether you do so in truth or not, some of you would probably reply that you mean what you say, that what you do you do sincerely ; and that this must surely be the same thing as *doing so in truth*.

The question of sincerity, however, in

the sense in which it is often and not unfairly understood, is not always quite the same with that of doing a thing in truth. For I may deceive myself as to the nature of a thing which I do. I may think I am doing one thing when I am really doing another. I may suppose that I am calling upon God as He is revealed in Christ, when I am not actually performing that part correctly. I may be calling upon Him not only in appearance, but in my own imagination, while I am not calling upon Him in truth.

You may seem, my brethren, to be calling upon God according to His word, when you join together with others in the prayers which are offered up within these walls, and when, in other ways, you act in a manner consistent with the carrying out of an orthodox profession. But the inconsistency between some men's modes of action in the world and the thorough earnestness of a spiritual calling upon God in the name of Jesus may be

so great as to prove that they are not calling upon Him *thus* in truth. It may show that they are not practically persuaded of the misery to which all people are certainly exposed in their natural condition ; that they do not feel the urgency of need in which they and all their fellows stand with respect to the atoning blood of the cross and the life-renewing energy of the Spirit ; and that they have not been transformed in the renewing of their minds so as to feel Christ to be, in their experience, the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Those that call upon God in truth are the men, women, and children, whose delight in Christ is practically so intense, that they count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Him, while the love of Him constrains them to live no more unto themselves, but unto Him that loved them and gave Himself for them.

II. Let us attend to the nearness of God to those who call upon Him in

truth. Those who do not know, in their own experience, what it is to call upon God in truth, have no idea of the nearness of God to His saints. To use the language of prayer—to have occasionally some solemn thoughts—to be concerned in some measure about the future beyond the grave—and to acquiesce in the general view that, as sinners against God, we all depend upon His mercy as it is shown in the Gospel of Christ—this is consistent with a state of mind in which God is still regarded as One at a great distance from us. It is not merely that a man does not see God with his outward eyes. It is not merely that the greatness of the Almighty's spiritual being removes Him from the sphere of our natural senses. There is something more than the imagination of local or necessary natural distance involved in that conception of God's separation from us, to which I now refer. A human being may be constantly at my elbow, and within hearing

of my voice, while I feel that he is really at a distance from me. He is distant from my mind and heart. He has no community of thought with me. He has no sympathy with me. Were I to speak to him of the things which most deeply interest me, I have no expectation that he will understand my meaning. Or perhaps I may have a still stronger impression of his distance from my ideas and my affections. I may feel that he is hostile to me, or at least so opposed to my ways of thinking or to my desires, that I tremble to say one word to him about myself, or even to manifest to him by my manner or my actions, the emotions or designs that are at work within me.

The case is altogether different when I know by experience that the person literally near me is also near to me in sentiments and feelings; when I expect Him to respond to the utterances of my heart's overflowings; and when I am satisfied he comprehends the movements of my under-

standing. Then I am ready with confidence to address him. Then I care not comparatively how much he sees of what I do. Then I know that even my weaknesses may be apparent to him without injury either to my real interests or to my intercourse with him.

There are many who can well appreciate the character of this true and precious nearness to a valued friend on earth, who know not how to admit the notion of the same kind of nearness in their relationship to the God that made them. Yet it would be difficult for them to allege any reasonable consideration which should prevent it. The infinite knowledge of God ought to persuade them that He will make more just allowances for their true situation and their temptations, than any human being is likely to do with a fallible judgment. They may rest assured also, that He cannot fail to perceive all their anxieties and to hear all their words. Why, then, should they not confide in Him as a friend? Why should

they not honour Him as a Father? Why should they keep back from the exercise of realizing His love and friendship? Why should they not call upon His name? Why should they not listen to His voice in His providence and in His holy word? Has He not encompassed and followed them with His exuberant bounty since they came into the world? Is He not speaking to them every day by the beauties of nature—by the brightness of the sun—and by the refreshment of their bodies? Does He not speak to them with rich variety of gracious and encouraging language in the Scriptures which declare His will? Why should they hesitate to lift up their souls to Him as to one who will hold pleasant communion with them? Why should they think of Him as distant from them? Why should they keep their own minds and hearts at a distance from *His* mind and heart? The true reason is that they know not how to answer to Him for their transgressions of His law. Their own hearts condemn them,

and they feel, (sometimes, indeed, without distinct consciousness of the fact of their feeling,) that God is greater than their hearts and knoweth all things. Along with this reason another operates which is very much akin to it, and cannot be practically separated from it. They are in love with sin, and they are averse to holiness. They may wish to escape from destruction. They may, therefore, seek for God's favour after some kind of fashion. But they do not wish to come into such close fellowship with an absolutely pure and holy God, as will lead them to aim continually at being absolutely pure and holy themselves. They may keep themselves free from gross vices. They may live respectably in a respectable community. But they are essentially ungodly. That is, they desire to live, in a large measure, without any special reference to God or His ways. They trust, perhaps, that they may keep on the whole within the confines of His laws. But within those confines they wish

to please themselves. The idea of living always with their thoughts and feelings in practical fellowship at every turn with God, is distasteful to them. And so they persuade themselves that such continual fellowship with a Divine Being is not required, and is out of the question. Their distaste for it is intimately connected with their consciousness of guilt. They cannot face the question of fervent communion with the righteous Judge of all the earth, without looking at the question how to be at peace with Him, notwithstanding their guilt in His sight. Thus, wandering away from God, the human mind tends to become more and more corrupt. Guilt increases corruption, and corruption increases guilt. Oh, how is it possible that any one, with a sense of unpardoned guilt, and a feeling of unsubdued corruption, should be able to think with comfort or hope of the Lord being nigh to him! The thought of the Lord coming near to such an one, suggests the

thought that He will come as a consuming fire.

We have seen, however, that the way is open to call upon God with hope. If we do not confess our lost and guilty state, if we do not humble ourselves before God for our iniquities, if we do not have respect to the atonement of Jesus, if we come with any false pretences of self-righteousness; then we do not call upon God in truth. We do not recognize the truth of our own case. We do not honour the truth as to God's righteous law. We do not magnify the truth concerning the perfect and finished work of our Redeemer. But if, in the exercise of true faith, we have respect to that work; and if our faith thus lead us to the mercy-seat of God, making mention of the blood of Jesus; then we are brought nigh to God by that blood; then, while we in faith draw nigh to God, He will draw nigh to us. He will enable us to rejoice in His spiritual presence with our souls. We

shall find that His mind in Christ harmonises with our believing mind, and that His heart in Christ sympathizes with our sanctified emotions. We shall be led to place unbounded confidence in that Lord, who has sent His Son to save us, and who through His Son is nigh unto all them that call upon Him in truth.

III. Let us attend to the encouragement given by my text to prayer.

Encouragement to prayer is, according to the view I have taken, encouragement to calling upon God in truth. In other words, it is encouragement to our seeking the fellowship of God in Christ for the fulfilment of divine promises and the satisfying of our sanctified desires. One of the greatest hindrances to the benefit of prayer is the tendency of professing Christians to underrate the encouragement which we have to it. Even true believers are often far from being fully alive to the amount and scope of this encouragement. On the one hand, there is a disposition to take too

circumscribed a view of the field for Prayer. On the other hand, there is an inclination to limit unduly the confidence of expectation by which it ought to be accompanied. I speak not now of those who feel difficulty as to the reconcilment of efficacy in prayer with the sovereignty of God's Almighty working. That difficulty is effectually met, when an earnestly anxious soul is brought into simple contact with the various parts of the divine word in their practical bearing upon spiritual peace and comfort. But I take for granted, in this discourse, the removal of that difficulty. I assume that the parties I am dealing with recognize the efficacy of prayer in particular matters or in particular cases. And I suppose that they are apt to err by circumscribing the field for prayer on the one hand, and by limiting the expectation of prayer on the other.

There is a very great unwillingness to allow the true principle of prayer any freedom of entrance into the ordinary

transactions of our worldly life. I say the principle of prayer: because I do not mean to contend for the palpable introduction of its outward manifestation into every variety of earthly scene. There *may* be circumstances in which, by so doing, we might be giving that which is holy unto the dogs, or casting our pearls before swine. Every useful and scriptural manifestation would soon find its place in our system, were the right principle established in the mind, and exercising a large enough influence over the heart and practice. The expediencies of earthly action, and the varying play of natural motives, absorb so much attention under the pressure of affairs and engagements, that the idea of calling upon God with reference to all interests, and at each turn of his daily course, is often far from welcome to the busy man. Still less does it easily obtain its place in the thoughts of those who occupy their time in more frivolous lines of action. There is often an anxiety to have religious satisfac-

tion in the usual order of our habits, while there is a secret wish to keep our religion away from not a few of our pursuits. Provided I attend to religious exercises in their proper place, a young man is apt to say, and do what I can to arrange my conduct consistently with Christian precepts, I may surely prosecute my lawful calling in a cheerful and genial manner, and take my needful relaxation, or enjoy my wholesome pleasures, without carrying with me the constant weight of my religious thoughts. The feeling is apt to be unconsciously at work in the heart, even when the lips are restrained from expressing it, that the admission of a prayerful spirit into the favourite concerns of individual and social life, must impart a solemn dullness to existence which will deprive it of its zest. The true explanation of this feeling is hid from some, and forgotten by others. It is hid from some because their eyes have not been opened to see the beauty of holiness, or to welcome a close fellow-

ship with God. They have not found their way to the spiritual joy in the nearness of God to their souls—the spiritual joy which makes hidden communion with God the fountain of cheerfulness in every occupation—the spiritual joy which gathers materials to work upon from all activity and from all intercourse—from things grave and from things light—from that which is agreeable and from that which is hard and trying. They are thus without the clue which opens to the mind the real character and full benefit of prayer. They do not perceive the true explanation of the feeling which is apt to restrain them from calling upon God. That explanation is frequently forgotten by others, even when their light has revealed it to them. Those who know the excellency of the fellowship to which the Gospel invites the soul, are often tempted by the bias of the natural heart, to lose sight of the extent to which that fellowship should pervade the current of their thoughts.

They still put God at too great a distance from them. They still deal with him as if, amid the manifold demands of earth, their communications with Him must be few and far between. They are practically insensible to the fact that they are restraining the spirit of prayer, through an unwillingness to make their fellowship with God 'so close as to exclude a carnal and worldly spirit.

But when the truth announced in my text is thoroughly realized ; when the Lord is seen and felt to be indeed nigh to us, even as a father is nigh to his loving children—when, through the blood of Jesus, we come by faith into close and endearing intercourse with *Him* against whom we have sinned, but who has forgiven our sin ; when our confidence in his faithfulness as well as in His mercy assures us that He will order all our matters for our highest good ; and when He lets us experience the tenderness of a Divine Father's loving heart, as brought home to us through the

human tenderness and devotedness of His well-beloved Son; then we become alive to a stream of happiness, which cannot fail us in any emergency. Then we discover the rich application of its ever flowing waters to the smallest as well as the largest particulars of our course. Then we feel that, since the Lord is always nigh to us, we never can be so placed as to shut out the duty and privilege and joy of calling upon Him in truth.

The nearness of an earthly friend to us, not merely in the sense of being naturally connected or associated with us, but in the sense also of being readily accessible to us for the communication of our ideas and the satisfaction of our desires, suggests at once the thought that He will be our counsellor in difficulty and our supporter in trouble. If the Lord be near to us both as a father and as a friend, why should we neglect to seek His counsel or to lean upon His help, when we are dealing with the difficulties and troubles of

the world ? Do we think that, because we cannot trace the working of His hand in the special circumstances of our outward history, we cannot rely upon a practical answer to the applications which we may make to Him, or upon His real interposition on our behalf ? What is this but unbelief ? We do not see His movements. We do not feel His touch. We cannot lay hold upon Him with our outward senses. Therefore, we will not trust in the simplicity of His promises. Perhaps we are so taken up with our study of natural laws—those laws which He Himself, in His own sovereignty, has fixed—perhaps we are so full of the conclusions to which they lead us—that we cannot allow room in our thoughts for the simple idea of His own sovereign exercise of His infinite will in the government of His creatures and the ordaining of events. It is not indeed for us to say what wondrous laws He may have established beyond our grasp, even in the nature of the universe. He may act

either *with* or *without* means. It may have been His wise pleasure to organise a vast variety of instrumentality, which no earthly science can measure, and by which He may execute many an unexpected purpose. Enough for us to recognize His unlimited sovereignty, so as to rely upon His friendship and His promises. It is the part of faith to realise that friendship and those promises, in the face of the fact that the outward eye sees Him not, and the outward hand cannot reach Him. It is the part of faith to bring Him as near to the soul as ever the eye or the hand of sense brought an earthly friend near to a man's familiar intercourse. In this respect, as in many others, faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. The Lord is not thus nigh to all men. In one sense, indeed, He is nigh to all. He is ready to hear their call. He is waiting to be gracious to their souls. They are all invited to repent, and return to the enjoyment of His love. But

He is not near as a friend to those who practically reject His mercy, and despise the Gospel of His Son. In order to enjoy His near presence with us, we must believe in the message which He has sent to us; we must trust in the blood and in the merits of Jesus; we must look to our Father in heaven as come nigh to us in the face of His only-begotten and well-beloved Son. The Lord is near as a friend only to those who call upon Him in truth—who call upon Him in the name of Jesus—who call upon Him in deep repentance and contrition of soul. But if, indeed, we do thus call upon Him—if our prayers be thus the fruit of a true and realising faith—and if, in all our earthly anxieties, we have recourse, under the influence of such a faith, to the throne of grace, then we have assuredly a rich encouragement to persevere in our believing supplications. For the Lord is ever nigh to us through the blood of Jesus. All power in heaven and on earth is given unto Jesus for the

benefit of His people. For the sake of Jesus the Lord will make all things to work together for good to believers. But He will be inquired of for His benefits. And therefore His nearness for their welfare must be laid hold of through their calling upon Him in truth.

If we have so much encouragement to pray, even with respect to our smaller matters, still greater reason have we to ask with all fervour for the spiritual blessings of the everlasting kingdom. The whole use of earthly benefits is to prepare us for heavenly joy. Those who call upon the Lord in truth desire that all their earthly history should be so arranged as to advance their souls on the way of peace, and bring them to a large participation of the glory that will follow. Their hearts long fervently for deeper and more satisfying experiences of the joy and comfort which the fellowship of Jesus can furnish. They hunger and thirst after righteousness. They desire to be full of peace and hope

in looking to the precious blood and the unspotted righteousness of their Immanuel. They desire to be cleansed from corruption and prepared for heaven by a thorough sanctification. They hunger and thirst and they shall be filled. They call upon the Lord in truth, and He is nigh to them. He will listen to the voice of their cry—He will give them all that they need.

In thinking of the nearness of our Heavenly Father to our souls, let us bear in mind that Jesus and His Father are one; that the Son of God is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person; and that, consequently, He who died upon the Cross, though now exalted in the heavens, is Himself always near to those who call upon His name in truth. But the nearness of the Son of God is the nearness of one who is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh—whose tender sympathies are those of a brother and a sharer of human experiences, and who combines with the high attributes of His God-

head all the qualities that can endear Him to us as a fellow-man upon the earth. Listening to His gracious words recorded for our benefit, thinking of what He did and suffered, and rejoicing in His victory over the power of darkness, we are enabled to dwell with fond remembrance on the abundant proofs we have of His holiness, His faithfulness, and His loving-kindness. We may in earnest thought retrace His footsteps on the Mount of Olives, and look upon Him calling there in truth upon His God and Father. We may contemplate with adoring reverence, and yet with feelings of loving fellowship, the closeness and nearness of His human heart to the mind and will of His Father; and we may see Him thus encouraging us by example as well as precept to approach with persevering earnestness the throne of heavenly grace. The practical end of our faith in the Word of God is our personal conformity to the image of His Son. If He occupied His soul from day to day in loving

intercourse with His Father on high, so ought we, through the power of His Spirit resting upon us. If He continually reflected in His human person the gracious nearness of that Father to the sinful sons and daughters of men, so ought His followers, fired by their love toward Him, to let their light, as derived from Him, shine before the men, women, and children around them. In proportion to the measure of fidelity and consistency where-with a professing disciple realises and exhibits this conformity, in that proportion does he adorn the doctrine of his Saviour—in that proportion does he, after his departure from the world, dwell in the remembrance of the saints as one in whom they have delighted and whose name they hold in grateful veneration.

I may surely say, in addressing this congregation, that no better example of reflected Gospel light, and reflected Gospel graciousness, could be referred to than

the example furnished by the life and ministry of your late much valued pastor.

I cannot speak specially of what he was either in his private action for your spiritual good, through his visits and otherwise, or in his pulpit ministrations here. You know how he combined the faithfulness of a divinely taught instructor with the affectionate earnestness of a brother, a father, and a friend. You know how judgment went along with firmness and gentleness in all his dealings with you. You can testify how reliable he was as a support, a comforter, and a counsellor. Both young and old among you have experienced the benefit of his large hearted and watchful care for you. You have felt that he was dealing with you in the spirit of his Master.

Some there are here who can trace his progress in his position as a minister of Glasgow from its commencement to its close. They feel how strong were the ties that bound them to him. Through their

long experience of his worth, they can say how steadily, as he advanced in years, he grew in grace, and thus made his usefulness an increasingly precious thing to the community, in the view of all who loved the truth of God and cared for the highest welfare of their fellow-citizens.

I cannot speak of these characteristic features of his history, as some of you might speak. But I can speak of him from experience in two respects, as a person eminently showing forth, by reflected light, the spirit of that God and Saviour who is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. I can speak of him as a guide of the Church. I can speak of him as a Christian friend.

There never was a counsellor in ecclesiastical and religious movements who sustained more consistently together the dignity, the sobriety of mind, the fervent love, the anxious thought, the kind consideration, the vigilant caution, and the clear

decision which became a servant of the Lord Jesus entrusted with great responsibilities. In earlier years he was one of the safest and most energetic assistants to the advancement of every good cause. In later years he had become a tower of strength and a fountain of wisdom for that Free Church of Scotland which he had done so much to uphold and exhibit. He loved her greatly; he delighted in her faithfulness to divine truth and to her old principles; he longed for her augmented influence in a condition of freedom from all narrowness of spirit, so as to vindicate her character and position in the eyes of Christendom and to future generations. He welcomed her steadfast adherence to her convictions regarding the obligations under which all powers and principalities of earth are placed to the authority of the divine word. He rejoiced in her continued and unswerving maintenance of the flag of spiritual liberty or independence which he was the instrument of specially raising in the

year 1838. But he was most of all gratified when she was enabled to rouse herself to the work of, on the one hand, evangelizing the masses of our population, and, on the other hand, adequately sustaining a Gospel ministry throughout the land for the edification and comfort of a believing people. No words can tell the amount and value of his exertions for these objects. The blessing of God largely accompanied and followed him in all his efforts. He had many disappointments and trials to endure, but influences from on high supported and animated him.

Of all the distinguished men whose loss we now deplore, there was no one in whom more confidence could be placed for sagacity in counsel and skill in the accomplishment of good. At the same time, he was in all cases manifestly guided by fixed principles of religious obligation, and by a solemn sense of responsibility. He would make no compromise of what he believed to be truth, though his manner, both of

consultation and action, was full of courtesy and conciliatory kindness.

As a Christian friend, I have known him for thirty-five years. I have had opportunities of close association with him, both for consultation and social intercourse, from nearly the beginning of that period. He was always ready with his friendship, his advice, and his help. His friendship was always at once warm, true, and faithful. His advice was of unspeakable value. His help was without ostentation, but thoroughly effective.

The loss is a very grievous one ; though the certainty of his rapid passage from the troubles of earth to the full enjoyment of his Saviour's fellowship is fitted not only to mitigate grief, but to inspire the heart with a sympathising joy. Blessed, we may feel, is he, our friend, for he has died in the Lord. His works do follow him. He has found the complete benefit of that free forgiveness of sin and that thorough sanctification of soul which Jesus has procured

for him. He has departed to be with Christ, which for him is far better, though to us it is a great loss.

But the excellency of his personal friendship must be as well known to many amongst you as it can be to one whose lot has been cast in another locality. The elders and deacons especially of this congregation, as well as others, have had more frequent occasion to feel that excellency than one living at a distance. You have had this morning a most affecting testimony from a minister of this city. I enter no more than he did into the sacred circle of domestic reverence and affection. From what I experienced in public and private intercourse with your pastor, I know how precious he must have been as a husband and a parent, and in all the close relationships of life. I have experienced his great and welcome sympathy in the most trying circumstances.

In conclusion, let me fix your attention on a view of my text to which I have not

yet adverted. I mean its aspect with reference to the position in which we all are as standing every day on the verge of eternity. The Lord was very nigh to your beloved and revered pastor on the 30th day of last month. He was nigh to him as a father is nigh to a loving son. Jesus was nigh to him as a brother is nigh to one with whom he has cordial sympathy. But He was nigh to him in another sense—nigh to him as He was to the thief on the cross—nigh to him as one ready to assure him that before another day should pass he would be with His Lord in paradise. We know not, brethren, how near to us God may be as one summoning us away from the earth. Oh, let us seek and pray that we may by faith realise His nearness to us in Christ after such a fashion as will give us assurance that, when the call comes, it will be a call to eternal glory. Amen.

EXTRACT OF MINUTE *from Records of Session
of the Free College Church, Glasgow, 28th
April, 1875.*

THE Session embrace this, the earliest, opportunity of placing on record the expression of the deep veneration and affection which they entertained for the late Dr. Buchanan, of their grief for the loss they have sustained by his sudden and unexpected removal, and of the profound regard they will ever cherish for his memory.

The Session, while mourning their sad bereavement, desire to acknowledge the goodness of God in so long lending to them one who was distinguished by pre-eminent gifts and graces, which were ever zealously exercised in promoting the

welfare of the Church of which he was so honoured a minister.

After an experience of about six years in the ministry, first at Gargunnoch, and then at Saltoun, Dr. Buchanan came to the Tron parish of Glasgow, in 1833, at a time when the City had been wakening up under the influence of revived evangelical religion, of which that parish had been blessed with a large share ; and at once he established for himself the character of an able preacher, and a vigorous and devoted pastor.

A prolonged ministry, of the whole of which there are a very few surviving witnesses, gave full proof of the justice of the early estimate formed of him, in his sound, distinct, and convincing statements of the truth of God ; his clear exposition of Scripture by consecutive lecturing ; his appeals to the conscience, and his fervent devotional exercises ; combined with his singularly wise counsel, and his generous sympathy in the more

private relations with the members of his flock. It is gratefully recalled to memory how unsparing of his own safety or comfort Dr. Buchanan uniformly showed himself in pastoral visitations ; and with what thoughtful tenderness he ministered to the sick and the infirm under his care : even while the burden of wider responsibilities was increasingly weighing upon him.

The state of the Tron parish, and of the City generally, enlisted all his powers in the cause of Church extension, which was, at that time, urged upon the community so eloquently by his great predecessor Dr. Chalmers. He laboured successfully in this important work until circumstances called him to defend and maintain the independence of the Church of Scotland.

In the struggle which issued in the Disruption of 1843 (and of which he afterwards became the historian in his well known work, "The Ten Years' Conflict,")

he occupied a foremost place. His sagacity in deliberation could scarcely be surpassed; and was, in consequence, greatly relied on by the other remarkable men of the time, who stood in the front of the controversy during that memorable period.

From 1843 his conspicuous abilities were largely devoted to reconstructing the framework, and organizing the finances of the Church which had surrendered the advantages of ecclesiastical establishment, in order to preserve its freedom and the spiritual privileges of its members. In 1848 he was appointed Convener of the Sustentation Fund Committee, a post which he held to the close of his life. During this long period he devoted much attention to the working of the Fund, being strongly convinced of the close bearing it had on the spiritual welfare of the Church; deeply interesting himself in its prosperity, and discharging the duties connected with his position in

such a manner as commanded universal approval and confidence, while it has secured for the Sustentation Fund scheme a success which is recognized far beyond the limits of the Free Church of Scotland.

And what he did for the Free Church generally, he was careful to do for his own congregation in all the details of the work of the Deacons' Court; exhibiting, at the same time, an unselfish liberality, which proved the sincerity of his love to the Church, and the entire absence of personal considerations in his efforts for its welfare.

Further, as soon as possible after supplying the pressing necessities of the period of the Disruption, his interest in Home Missionary work was manifested anew; and while he occupied his congregation with the Wynd Mission, he laid the foundations broad and deep of a great enterprise for reclaiming the lapsed masses at home, by which this City has been, and continues to be, marvellously

blessed, much of the success of which, as of subsequent schemes for the promotion of Church extension in Glasgow, being obviously attributable, under God, to his wise and sustained efforts.

When the Free Church College in this City was founded by Dr. Clark, in 1855, a large portion of the labour inseparable from the undertaking devolved upon Dr. Buchanan; and the Institution ever had a warm place in his affections. And when it was found by him that his much loved work of Church extension might be materially promoted by a disjunction from the Free Tron Church, his multiplied labours on almost every department of Church work did not deter him from entering on what may be called a third commencement of ministerial work in Glasgow, when, after the necessary arrangements, the Free College Church was formed into a congregation in the end of 1857.

With what wisdom, perseverance, and

self-denial he overcame the difficulties of the situation, at a time of life when he might well have excused himself from beginning new undertakings, is known to all who were his office-bearers. And in this, as in his former congregations, he felt and enforced the necessity for the Christian people exerting themselves to do good to others : he took the liveliest interest in the two fields of missionary labour which were successively chosen and occupied.

In both the recent periods of revival, in 1861 and 1874, he looked with reverence, delight, and hope to what he believed to be the gracious movement of the Spirit of God in the midst of us ; and he took his full share in the work, while he aided it much by his wise judgment.

His zeal for education, common and Scriptural, was manifested in all the spheres of ministerial exertion ; and the appreciation of his character and efforts

in this direction by his fellow-citizens was evinced when they elected him a member of the first School Board in this City. This is not the place to speak of the debt which Glasgow owes to him in that capacity ; but to all who desire the godly upbringing of the young, his services must have been highly esteemed. And not only as respects education, but in every scheme of philanthropy, having for its object the good of any class of society, whether at home or abroad, his support was usually that which was first desired, as it was that which was always cordially given.

The paternal solicitude of Dr. Buchanan for his colleague in the pastorate, his kindly and generous consideration for the other office-bearers, and for all his people, were unvarying ; and his special attentions in times of domestic sorrow, his loving and sagacious counsel on occasions of difficulty, will not be forgotten by those who were the members of his flock.

And now, his work being done, the way in which the Lord took him home, neither exposing him to violent death, nor yet leaving him to sink by a slow process of decay, but permitting him to labour on fully to the close, may be justly regarded as to him a mark of special favour. And although the Session cannot but feel the sadness of the death happening at such a distance from most of his friends, they recognize the good Providence of God which sent him on a mission to a city where he found a measure of rest from his ordinary labours, and which he especially enjoyed from its intrinsic importance and interesting accompaniments.

The Session are deeply sensible of the irreparable loss which this congregation has sustained ; but they desire humbly to submit to the Almighty Disposer of all events ; and earnestly unite in seeking for themselves as for all who feel the pressure of this bereavement—that which

alone can compensate for it—an increased baptism of the Spirit of God.

The Session also desire specially to express their deepest sympathy with the widow and family of their deceased pastor under their very sore bereavement; and fervently commend them to the care and compassion of Him who binds up the broken in heart, and comforts those who mourn.

PASTORAL LETTER
FROM THE
REV. DR. BUCHANAN
TO THE CONGREGATION OF THE
FREE COLLEGE CHURCH.

READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION
ON THE EVENING OF TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1875.

DR. BUCHANAN *died suddenly at Rome, about Three o'Clock, on
the Morning after the Meeting.*

PASTORAL LETTER.

ROME, 23rd March, 1875.

*To the OFFICE-BEARERS and MEMBERS
of FREE COLLEGE CHURCH,*

MY VERY DEAR FRIENDS,

Having heard that the Annual Congregational Meeting is fixed for the 30th of this month, I most gladly avail myself of the only means by which it is possible for me to associate myself with you on that interesting occasion. Though I cannot be personally present, be assured I shall be with you in spirit and heart. Let me begin, therefore, what I am going

to say, by offering you my warmest and most affectionate greetings. I earnestly hope and pray that the great Master of assemblies may be with you and grant you His richest blessing. My heart's desire and prayer for you all—young and old—is that "you may be saved."

I am truly sorry to know that even since I left home some esteemed and valued members of the Congregation have passed away from the Church below, to join, as we fondly trust, the general assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. Such events, ever and anon taking place, ought surely to keep alive in our minds the recollection of our mortality, and to stir us up with increasing fidelity and diligence "to occupy till the Lord come." To myself the lesson is specially applicable. Since coming to Rome I have entered on the forty-ninth year of my ministry, and am now more than half through the seventy-third year of my age. In such circum-

stances, my time for serving God in that noblest and best of all departments of human labour—"the Gospel of his Son"—cannot be long. In this very view of my position it has been a peculiar gratification to me to have been permitted, before the close of my career, to preach Christ in the city where the inspired author of some of the grandest and most precious portions of Holy Scripture suffered martyrdom, for the faith which he himself taught with such consuming earnestness and power. Paul's character has always had a special fascination for my mind. Save our Lord's *own* life, I know of no other that seems so fitted to inspire admiration and love, and to stimulate the Christian ministry. Though there is much to awaken a deep and thrilling interest in the vast ruins on the Palatine Hill—of the Palaces of the Cæsars ; the palace in which Tiberius, the contemporary of our Lord, was brought up ; and the still more massive and gigantic structure which was the dwelling of the father of Titus,

who was the arm of the Lord's vengeance against Jerusalem—I confess that the walls on which I looked with the strongest feeling were those of the Imperial Judgment Hall, where it is beyond all reasonable doubt that Paul stood at Cæsar's bar, to receive the sentence which doomed by far the greatest man then living upon earth to a bloody death.

One of the many things the Church of Rome has done to expose it to just indignation, is the way in which it has degraded the most solemn events in history by its absurd and puerile traditions. At a certain spot outside the walls, and not far from the magnificent modern Basilica of St. Paul's (which cost £4,000,000 sterling, and which is set down where there are hardly any people), the place is pointed out where, they say, Paul was beheaded by one stroke of the executioner's sword. All very well. So far the tradition *may* be true. But the tradition goes on to tell that the dissevered head of the martyr struck the ground with

such force that it rebounded thrice from the earth, and that each time a fountain burst forth. It is "a lie with a circumstance," as Shakespeare says: for no doubt the three fountains are there to this day. But so it is. Here in this city of the Popes almost everything is overlaid, and in many cases is made utterly childish and ridiculous, by the silly legends with which superstition and priestcraft have been at pains to surround it. I did not wonder, therefore, to hear the other day a very able Nonconformist minister of London say—"Is there *really* anything in the sights shown us here which one can venture to believe? For my part (he added), I never was so afflicted with *doubts* as at this seat and centre of Infallibility."

I suspect, indeed I am sure, the same sort of feeling, and on the most sacred of all subjects, has gone broad and deep into the soul of the Italian people. The late acts of the General Council have confirmed and completed this sceptical state of mind.

In reading the Roman journals, which I do almost every day, I see conclusive proof of this state of things, as being all but universally prevalent among the educated classes of society. But these journals, though they write ably and well against the Pope's arrogant pretensions to dictate to states and governments, and to interfere with the civil rights and interests of individual men and of society at large, have nothing to put in the place of the Papal religion. Philosophy, literature, science, the arts,—on all these they can and do discourse with great intelligence, and also on political questions generally. But of true religion—the religion of the Bible—they know nothing, and I fear I must add, they do not care to know.

Of course there is a church party here, as in other Roman Catholic countries. There is a considerable section of the old Roman aristocracy, who have been long dandled in the lap of the Papal court, and whose ignorant conservatism only moves

them to dam up those waters of public opinion which ere long, in all human probability, will burst their banks and sweep all before them. And there is at the other extreme of society an ignorant and degraded class, who are either godless infidels and communists, or blinded victims of the most abject superstition, and to whom the shows and ceremonies of Papal worship are the very sort of religion which they desire to have.

In so describing the existing state of things in this community, and which does not materially differ from the state of things in Italy all over, of course I do not forget or dispute the fact that even in this apostate Papal Church there are elements of a better kind. Doubtless there are within it both pious women and good men, who do their best to shut their eyes to the grosser errors of the system, and who have no sympathy with its vices and its tyranny. They have been brought up in accordance with its creed and worship,

and they have learned to look at these chiefly on the side that is most in harmony with their own sincerely devotional feelings, and with their own purer and better desires and thoughts. But, alas! they do—and they *can* do—nothing to alter or even to modify the essential character and tendencies of the vast and complicated institution to which they belong. I firmly believe, indeed, that it is a system so knit together in all its parts—and that even its very worst peculiarities have become so indispensable to its existence—that for the Church of Rome reformation is simply impossible. This institution of the Papacy, as a friend said to me not long ago, under the gorgeous dome and surrounded by the hierarchical magnificence of St. Peter's, "This institution cannot be amended; it has got to be destroyed." Yes, and in His own time and way God will do it.

In view of all this, one would fain see some appearance of the rising up of "sons

of thunder," to sound, with a voice like Luther's, the rousing cry—"Come out of her, my people." There are voices being lifted up, but they are not of the class to which the men of the sixteenth century belonged. Help, Lord! We must not despise the day of small things. The Lord is mighty, and He is working mightily in ways that are all preparatory to the final fall of this Great Babylon.

My own work here has been very pleasant. I have a much stronger impression than I had, before coming to Rome, of the value of the work our Church is doing in Italy. But of that I may have an opportunity of telling at another time and in a different form when I get an opportunity of meeting our Continental Committee at Edinburgh.

Hoping that the Reports of the past twelve months, to be laid before your Annual Meeting on the 30th, may be satisfactory, and encouraging—both in a financial and in a spiritual sense; and,

looking forward with great delight to the prospect of being again among you by the month of May,

Believe me to be,

My very dear friends,

Always yours affectionately,

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

P.S.—My wife and my two daughters join heartily in all my greetings. R. B.

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